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THIS FIRST EDITION OF
WALT WHITMAN'S DIARY IN CANADA
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# WALT WHITMAN'S DIARY IN CANADA

Walt Whitman
London Sept 22
1880

# WALT WHITMAN'S DIARY IN CANADA

WITH EXTRACTS FROM
OTHER OF HIS DIARIES AND
LITERARY NOTE-BOOKS

EDITED BY
WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY

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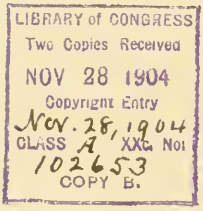


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# EDITOR'S PREFACE

The transcribing of these out-door notes from the worn and time-stained fragments of paper (backs of letters, home-made note-books, etc.), on which they were originally written, has been so fascinating a task for me that I feel confident the subject-matter will interest other lovers of Whitman. I don't know that they need any other foreword than just the telling how they came into my hands for publication.

In the autumn of 1900 I wrote to my old friend, the late Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke (the senior member of Walt Whitman's literary executors), suggesting that he join me in bringing out a "Readers' Handbook to Leaves of Grass," in the preparation of which I had been engaged for a number of years, by contributing any material he might have that was available. He responded with enthusiasm to this proposal for coöperative work. But, alas! a year later he had passed into eternity.* By his son, Dr. Edward Pardee Bucke, however, I was generously

* He fell on the icy floor of a veranda of his residence, struck on the back of his head, and never regained consciousness. Few knew that this gay-hearted optimist, with his magnificent physique, had to fight his way through life (after twenty) without the aid of feet, other than artificial. His feet were amputated after being frozen in a (finally successful) attempt to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the winter of 1856, in company with one of the two original discoverers of silver in Nevada. I have the romantic printed account of that daring feat.

furnished with such manuscripts of Walt Whitman as seem to have been intended for our purpose, and from them the following diary and other notes were selected. The publication of the Readers' Handbook is held over for the present.

In his "Specimen Days," Whitman devotes only a couple of pages to the St. Lawrence and Saguenay trip, — a condensed abstract of his journal.

The portrait used as a frontispiece to this book is reproduced from a photograph by Edy Brothers of London, Ontario, made during the visit to Dr. Bucke recorded in the diary. It has never before been published. All the notes in the volume are by the editor.

W. S. K.

Belmont, Mass.,
November, 1904.

# WALT WHITMAN'S DIARY IN CANADA

*London, Ontario, June* 18, 1880.[1] Calm and glorious roll the hours here — the whole twenty-four. A perfect day (the third in succession); the sun clear; a faint, fresh, just palpable air setting in from the south-west; temperature pretty warm at mid-day, but moderate enough mornings and evenings. Everything growing well, especially the perennials. Never have I seen verdure — grass and trees and bushery — to greater advantage. All the accompaniments joyous. Cat-birds, thrushes, robins, etc., singing. The profuse blossoms of the tiger-lily (is it the tiger-lily ?)[2] mottling the lawns

[1] Whitman left Camden on June 3 ("on a first-class sleeper") for Canada. Passed Niagara June 4, and has described his impressions of it as seen on this particular occasion (*Specimen Days*, p. 160, 1st ed.) On June 4 he writes, "I am domiciled at the hospitable house of my friends Dr. and Mrs. Bucke, in the ample and charming garden and lawns of the asylum."

[2] Probably the Turk's Head lily (*Lilium superbum*).

and gardens everywhere with their glowing orange-red. Roses everywhere, too.

A stately show of stars last night: the Scorpion erecting his head of five stars, with glittering Antares in the neck, soon stretched his whole length in the south; Arcturus hung overhead; Vega a little to the east; Aquila lower down; the constellation of the Sickle well toward setting; and the half-moon, pensive and silvery, in the southwest.

*June and July, Canada.* Such a procession of long-drawn-out, delicious half-lights nearly every evening, continuing on till 'most 9 o'clock all through the last two weeks of June and the first two of July! It was worth coming to Canada to get these long-stretch'd sunsets in their temper'd shade and lingering, lingering twilights, if nothing more.

[*No date.*] It is only here in large portions of Canada that wondrous *second wind*, the Indian summer, attains its amplitude and heavenly perfection, — the temperature; the sunny haze; the mellow, rich, delicate, almost *flavored* air:

"Enough to live — enough to merely be."

*June* 19. On the train from London to Sarnia — 60 miles.[1] A fine country, many good farms, plenty of open land, the finest strips of woods clean of underbrush — some beautiful clusters of great trees; plenty of fields with the stumps standing; some bustling towns.

[*Same date, Sarnia.*] *Sunset on the St. Clair.* I am writing this on Front Street, close by the river, — the St. Clair, — on a bank. The setting sun, a great blood-red ball, is just descending on the Michigan shore, throwing a bright crimson track across the water to where I stand. The river is full of row-boats and shells, with their crews of young fellows, or single ones, out practising, — a handsome, inspiriting sight. Up north I see at Point Edward, on Canada side, the tall elevator in shadow, with tall-square turret, like some old castle.

As I write, a long shell, with its crew of four stript to their rowing shirts, sweeps

[1] Sarnia (the former home for ten years of the late Dr. R. M. Bucke, when a practising physician) is a town of about 7000 inhabitants lying on the St. Clair River (Canadian side) near Lake Huron, about 55 miles northeast of Detroit.

swiftly past, the oars rattling in their row-locks.

Opposite, a little south, on the Michigan shore, stretches Port Huron. It is a still, moist, voluptuous evening, the twilight deepening apace. In the vapors fly bats and myriads of big insects. A solitary robin is whistling his call, followed by mellow *clucks*, in some trees near. The panting of the locomotive and measured roll of cars comes from over shore, and occasionally an abrupt snort or screech, diffused in space. With all these utilitarian episodes, it is a lovely, soft, voluptuous scene, a wondrous half-hour for sunset, and then the long rose-tinged half-light with a touch of gray we sometimes have stretched out in June at day-close. How musical the cries and voices floating in from the river! Mostly while I have been here I have noticed those handsome shells and oar-boats, some of them rowing superbly.

At nearly nine it is still quite light, [the atmosphere] tempered with blue film, but the boats, the river, and the Michigan shores quite palpable. The rose color still falls upon everything. A big river steamer is crawling athwart the stream, hoarsely hiss-

ing. The moon in its third quarter is just up behind me. From over in Port Huron come the just-heard sounds of a brass band, practising. Many objects — half-burnt hulls, partially sunk wrecks, slanting or upright poles — throw their black shadows in strong relief on the clear glistering water.

[*Sarnia*], *June* 20. A Far-off Reminiscence. I see to-day in a New York paper an account of the tearing down of old St. Ann's Church, Sands and Washington streets, Brooklyn, to make room for the East River Bridge landing and roadway. Away off, nearly 1000 miles distant, it roused the queerest reminiscences, which I feel to put down here. St. Ann's was twined with many memories of youth to me. I think the church was built about 1824, the time when I (a little child of six years) was first taken to live in Brooklyn, and I remember it so well then and for long years afterwards. It was a stately building with its broad grounds and grass, and the aristocratic congregation, and the good clergyman, Mr. McIlvaine (afterwards bishop of Ohio),[1] and

[1] Perhaps the best known and most popular preacher in Ohio a quarter-century ago. The son

the long edifice for Sunday-school (I had a pupil's desk there), and the fine gardens and many big willow and elm trees in the neighborhood. From St. Ann's started, over 50 years ago, a strange and solemn military funeral, — of the officers and sailors killed by the explosion of the steamer Fulton at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. I remember well the impressive services and the dead-march of the band (moving me even then to tears), and the led horses and officers' trappings in the procession, and the black-draped flags, and the old sailors, and the salutes over the grave in the ancient cemetery in Fulton Street just below Tillary (now all built over by solid blocks of houses and busy stores).[1] I was at school at the time of the explosion and heard the rumble which jarred half the city.

Nor was St. Ann's (Episcopal) the only church bequeathing Old Brooklyn reminiscences. Just opposite, within a stone's throw, on Sands Street, with a high range of steps, stood the main Methodist church,

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of Whitman's friend, John Burroughs, in 1902 married a grand-daughter of this Bishop McIlvaine.

[2] The Whitmans then lived in Tillary Street, where the father had built them a house.

always drawing full congregations (always active, singing and praying in earnest), and the scene of the powerful revivals of those days (often continued for a week night and day without intermission). This latter was the favorite scene of the labors of John N. Maffit, the famous preacher of his denomination. It was a famous church for pretty girls.

The history of those two churches would be a history of Brooklyn and of a main part of its families for the earlier half of the nineteenth century.

*Sarnia, June* 21. A Moonlight Excursion up Lake Huron. We were to start at 8 P. M., but after waiting forty minutes later for a music band, which to my secret satisfaction did n't come, we and the Hiawatha went off without it.

Point Edward on the Canada side and Fort Gratiot on the Michigan — the crossing-line for the Grand Trunk Railway, and looking well alive with lights and the sight of shadowy-moving cars — were quickly passed between by our steamer, after pressing through currents of rapids for a mile along here, very dashy and inspiriting, and we

were soon out on the wide sea-room of the Lake. The far and faint-dim shores, the cool night-breeze, the plashing of the waters, and most of all the well-up moon, full and round and refulgent, were the features of this pleasant water-ride, which lasted till midnight.

During the day I had seen the magnificent steamboat, City of Cleveland, come from above, and, after making a short stop at Port Huron opposite, sped on her swift and stately way down the St. Clair. She plies between Cleveland and Duluth, and was on her return from the latter place — makes the voyage in three (?) days. At a Sarnia wharf I saw the Asia, a large steamboat for Lake Superior trade and passengers; understood there were three other boats on the line. Between Sarnia and Port Huron some nice small-sized ferry-boats are constantly plying. I went aboard the Dormer and made an agreeable hour's jaunt to and fro, one afternoon.

A Sarnia Public School. Stopt impromptu at the school in George (?) where I saw crowds of boys out at recess, and went in without ceremony among them,

and so inside for twenty minutes to the school, at its studies, — music, grammar, etc. Never saw a healthier, handsomer, more intelligent or decorous collection of boys and girls, some 500 altogether. This twenty minutes' sight, and what it inferred, are among my best impressions and recollections of Sarnia.

[*Sarnia*]. Went down to an Indian settlement at Ah-me-je-wah-noong (*i. e.*, the Rapids) to visit the Indians, the Chippewas. Not much to see of novelty — in fact nothing at all of aboriginal life or personality; but I had a fine drive with the gentleman that took me — Dr. McLane, the physician appointed by the government for the tribe. There is a long stretch, three or four miles, fronting the St. Clair, south of Sarnia, running back easterly nearly the same distance, good lands for farming and rare sites for building — and this is the "reservation" set apart for these Chips. There are said to be four hundred of them, but I could not see evidences of one quarter of that number. There are three or four neat third-class wooden dwellings, a church, and council-house, but the less said about the rest of the edifices

the better. "Every prospect pleases," as far as land, shore, and water are concerned, however. The Dominion government keeps entire faith with these people (and all its Indians, I hear), preserves these reservations for them to live on, pays them regular annuities, and, whenever any of their land is sold, puts the proceeds strictly in their funds. Here they farm languidly (I saw some good wheat), fish, etc.; but the young men generally go off to hire as laborers and deck-hands on the water. I saw and conversed with Wa-wa-nosh, the interpreter, son of a former chief. He talks and writes as well as I do. In a nice cottage near by lived his mother, who doesn't speak anything but Chippewa. There are no very old people. I saw one man of thirty in the last stages of consumption. This beautiful and ample tract, in its present undeveloped condition, is quite an eyesore to the Sarnians.

[*London, Ont.*], *June* 24. TENNYSON'S "DE PROFUNDIS." To day I spent half an hour (in a recluse summer-house embowered) leisurely reading Tennyson's new poem "De Profundis." I should call the piece (to coin a term) a specimen of the mystical-recherché

— and a mighty choice specimen. It has several exquisite little verses, not simple like rosebuds, but gem-lines like garnets or sapphires, cut by a lapidary artist. These, for instance (some one has had a baby):

"O young life
Breaking with laughter from the dark!"

"O dear Spirit half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou — who wailest being born."

Then from "The Human Cry" attached:

"We feel we are nothing — for all is Thou and in Thee;
We feel we are something — that also has come from Thee."

Some cute friends afterward said it was altogether vague and could not be grasped. Very likely; it sounded to me like organ-playing, *capriccio*, which also cannot be grasped.

*Night of Saturday, July 3d.* Good night for stars and heavens; perfectly still and cloudless, fresh and cool enough; evenings very long; pleasant twilight till nine o'clock all through the last half of June and first half of July. These are my most pleasant hours.

The air is pretty cool, but I find it enjoyable, and like to saunter the well-kept roads. Went out about 10 on a solitary ramble in the grounds, slow through the fresh air, over the gravel walks and velvety grass, with many pauses, many upward gazings. It was again an exceptional night for the show and sentiment of the stars, very still and clear, not a cloud, and neither warm nor cold. High overhead the constellation of the Harp; south of east the Northern Cross; in the Milky Way the Diadem; and more to the north Cassiopeia; bright Arcturus and silvery Vega dominating aloft. But the heavens everywhere studded so thickly — layers on layers of phosphorescence, spangled with those still orbs, emulous, nestling so close, with such light and glow everywhere, flooding the soul.

*Sunday evening, July* 4. A very enjoyable hour or two this evening. They sent for me to come down in the parlor to hear my friend M. E. L., a deaf and dumb young woman, give some recitations (of course by pantomime, not a word spoken). She gave first an Indian legend, — the warriors, the women, the woods, the action of an old chief,

etc., very expressive. But best of all, and indeed a wonderful performance, she rendered *Christ stilling the tempest* (from Luke, is it?)

[*London*], *Canada*, *July* 6, '80. HAYMAKING, JULY 5, 6, 7. I go out every day two or three hours for the spectacle. A sweet, poetic, practical, busy sight. Never before such fine growths of clover and timothy everywhere as the present year; and I never saw such large fields of rich grass as on this farm. I ride around in a low easy basket-wagon drawn by a sagacious pony. We go at random over the flat just-mown layers and all around through lanes and across fields. The smell of the cut herbage, the whirr of the mower, the trailing swish of the horse-rakes, the forks of the busy pitchers, and the loaders on the wagons — I linger long and long to absorb them all. Soothing, sane, odorous hours! Two weeks of such.

It is a great place for birds. No gunning here, and no dogs or cats allowed. I never before saw so many robins, nor such big fellows, nor so tame.[1] You look out over

[1] The editor of this diary has the same to record of the robins of southern Wisconsin in the same lati-

the lawn any time and can see from four or five to a score of them hopping about. I never before heard singing wrens (the common house wren, I believe), either, to such advantage — two of them, these times, on the verandahs of different houses where I have been staying. Such vigorous, musical, well-fibred little notes! (What must the winter wren be, then? — they say it is far ahead of this.)

*July* 8. I am in the midst of haymaking, and, though but a looker-on, I enjoy it greatly, untiringly, day after day. Any hour I hear the sound of scythes sharpening, or the distant rattle of horse-mowers, or see loaded wagons, high-piled, slowly wending toward the barns; or, toward sundown, groups of tan-faced men going from work. To-day we are indeed at the height of it here in Ontario.

[*No date.*] A muffled and musical clang of cow-bells from the grassy wood-edge not far distant.

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tude. They have a larger and fresher look than Eastern robins.

*July* 10–14, *Canada.* In blossom now: Delphinium, blue, four feet high, great profusion; yellow-red lilies [written down for him in a lady's handwriting as *Lilium aurantium* and *Lilium Buschanium*]; a yellow coreopsis-like flower [*Cosmidium Burridgeanum*], same as I saw Sept. '79; wild tansy, weed from 10 to 15 inches high, white blossom, out in July (middle) Canada; straw-colored hollyhocks, many like roses, others pure white — beautiful clusters everywhere in the thick dense hedge-lines; aromatic white cedars at evening; Canadian red honeysuckles; the fences, verandahs, gables, covered with grapevines, ivies, honeysuckles; a certain clematis (the Jackmanni) bursting all over with deep purple blossoms, each with its four or five great leaves, delicate as some court lady's dress, but tough and durable — day after day; I afterwards saw a large six-leaved (?) one of pure satin-like white — as beautiful a flower as I ever beheld.

*Canada, July* 18, '80. Swallow-Gambols. I spent a long time to-day watching the swallows — an hour this forenoon and another hour afternoon. There is a pleasant, secluded, close-cropt grassy lawn of a couple

of acres or over, flat as a floor and surrounded by a flowery and bushy hedge, just off the road adjoining the house, — a favorite spot of mine. Over this open grassy area immense numbers of swallows have been sailing, darting, circling, and cutting large or small 8's and s's, close to the ground, for hours to-day. It is evidently for fun altogether. I never saw anything prettier — this free swallow-dance. They kept it up, too, the greater part of the day.

[Here follows Whitman's journal of his midsummer trip with Dr. R. M. Bucke down the St. Lawrence and up the Saguenáy rivers (Montreal, Quebec, Thousand Islands, Cape Eternity, Trinity Rock, etc.). The journal is written on the pages of a thick pocket "heft" (as the Germans call an extemporized book of stitched leaves), 5 by 8¼ inches in dimensions, and is labelled "St. Lawrence and Saguenay Trip, July and Aug. 1880." It is prefixed by a table of distances and a skeleton itinerary (which here follow), has three maps pasted in, covering the entire route, and contains various minor memoranda (names, addresses,

etc.) scattered here and there, usually on the verso of the sheet.]

### Distances.

| | Miles. |
|---|---|
| From Philadelphia to London about . | 520 |
| London to Toronto . . . . . | 120 |
| Toronto to Kingston . . . . . | 161 |
| Kingston to Montreal . . . . . | 172 |
| Montreal to Quebec . . . . . | 180 |
| Quebec to Tadousac . . . . . | 134 |
| Tadousac to Chicoutimi . . . . . | 101 |
| | 1388 |

### [Itinerary.]

Started from London 8.40 A. M. July 26 by R. R. to Toronto; arrived in T. same day.

Left Toronto by steamboat Algerian July 27, arrived at Kingston 5 A. M. 28th; stopt at Dr. W. G. Metcalf's; down at the Thousand Islands three days — "Hub Island."

Left Kingston 6 A. M. Aug. 3; arrived at Montreal same evening.

Left Montreal Aug. 5; down to Quebec in steamer Montreal.

Left Quebec 7 A. M. Aug. 6 in steamer Saguenay; down the St. Lawrence; splendid scenery.

Night of 6th and 7th up the Saguenay to Chicoutimi and Ha Ha Bay; Cape Eternity and Trinity Rock.

Then down, and, on our return, Aug. 8 early A. M. arrived in Quebec; staid two days.

Aug. 10 early A. M. in Montreal; left [same day] in Algerian; had a pleasant voyage (two days and nights) to Toronto.

Aug. 12 arrived in Toronto; 3 hours at Queen's Hotel; left 11 A. M.

Aug. 12, 13, 14, in Hamilton.

Back home to London Aug. 14.

*July* 26. Started this morning at 8.40 from London for Toronto, 120 miles by R. R. I am writing this on the cars, very comfortable. We are now (10–11 A. M.) passing through a beautiful country. Rained hard last night, and showery this morning; everything looking bright and green. I am enjoying the ride (in a big easy R. R. chair in a roomy car). The atmosphere cool, moist, just right, and the sky veiled. All pleasant fertile country, sufficiently diver-

sified, frequent signs of land not long cleared, — black stumps (often the fields fenced with the roots of them), patches of beautiful woods, beech, fine elms, thrifty apple orchards, the hay and wheat mostly harvested, barley begun, oats almost ready; some good farms (a little hilly between Dundas and Hamilton, and the same on to Toronto). Corn looking well, potatoes ditto; but the great show-charm of my ride is from the unfailing grass and woods.

Hamilton a bustling city.

As we approach Toronto everything looks doubly beautiful, especially the glimpses of blue Ontario's waters, sunlit, yet with a slight haze, through which occasionally a distant sail.

In Toronto at half-past one. I rode up on top of the omnibus with the driver. The city made the impression on me of a lively dashing place. The lake gives it its character.

*In Toronto, July* 27, '80. Long and elegant streets of semi-rural residences, many of them very costly and beautiful. The horse-chestnut is the prevalent tree: you

see it everywhere. The mountain ash now with its bunches of red berries.

[*Same date.*] I write this in Toronto, aboard the steamboat the Algerian, two o'clock P. M. We are presently off. The boat from Lewiston, New York, has just come in; the usual hurry with passengers and freight, and, as I write, I hear the pilot's bells, the thud of hawsers unloosened, and feel the boat squirming slowly from her ties, out into freedom. We are off, off into Toronto Bay (soon the wide expanse and cool breezes of Lake Ontario). As we steam out a mile or so we get a pretty view of Toronto from the blue foreground of the waters, — the whole rising spread of the city, groupings of roofs, spires, trees, hills in the background. Good-bye, Toronto, with your memories of a very lively and agreeable visit. [Entry here of name of James W. Slocum, of Detroit, Wagner car conductor, and memorandum "your James Slocum."]

*July* 27. A Day and Night on Lake Ontario. Steamboat middling good-sized and comfortable, carrying shore freight and summer passengers. Quite a voyage [Toronto to Kingston], the whole length of

Lake Ontario; very enjoyable day, clear, breezy, and cool enough for me to wrap my blanket around me as I pace the upper deck. For the first sixty or seventy miles we keep near the Canadian shore — of course no land in sight the other side; stop at Port Hope, Coburg, etc., and then stretch out toward the mid-waters of the lake.

I pace the deck or sit till pretty late, wrapt in my blanket, enjoying all, — the coolness, darkness, — and then to my berth awhile.

*July* 27 [28]. Rose soon after three to come out on deck and enjoy a magnificent night-show before dawn. Overhead the moon at her half, and waning half, with lustrous Jupiter and Saturn, made a trio-cluster close together in the purest of skies — with the groups of the Pleiades and Hyades following a little to the east. The lights off on the islands and rocks, the splashing waters, the many shadowy shores and passages through them in the crystal atmosphere, the dawn-streaks of faint red and yellow in the east, made a good hour for me. We landed on Kingston wharf just at sunrise.

Lake Ontario. Lake O. is 234 feet above sea-level (Huron is over 500, and Superior over 600). The chain of lakes and river St. Lawrence drain 400,000 square miles. The rainfall on this vast area averages annually a depth of thirty inches — so that the existence and supply of the river, fed by such inland preceding seas, is a matter of very simple calculation after all.

*July* 28. To-day Dr. M[etcalf] took me in his steam yacht a long, lively, varied voyage down among the Lakes of the Thousand Islands. We went swiftly on east of Kingston, through cuts, channels, lagoons (?)[1] and out across lakes; numbers of islands always in sight; often, as we steamed by, some almost grazing us; rocks and cedars; occasionally a camping party on the shores, perhaps fishing; a little sea-swell on the water; on our return evening deepened, bringing a miracle of sunset.

I could have gone on thus for days over the savage-tame beautiful element. We had some good music (one of Verdi's compositions) from the band of B battery as we

[1] These query marks are always Whitman's. If I use one, it shall be in brackets.

hauled in shore, anchored, and listened in the twilight (to the slapping rocking gurgle of our boat). Late when we reached home.

*July* 29. This forenoon a long ride through the streets of Kingston and so out into the country and the lake-shore road. Kingston is a military station (B battery), shows quite a fort, and half a dozen old martello towers (like big conical-topt pound cakes). It is a pretty town of fifteen thousand inhabitants.

*July* 31, *Evening, Saturday, Lakes of the Thousand Islands.* I am writing this at and after sundown in the central portion ("American side," as they call it here) of the Lakes of the Thousand Islands, twenty-five miles east of Kingston. The scene is made up of the most beautiful and ample waters, — twenty or thirty woody and rocky islands (varying in size, some large, others small, others middling), the distant shores of the New York side, some puffing steamboats in the open waters, and numerous skiffs and row-boats, all showing as minute specks in the amplitude and primal naturalness.

The brooding waters, the cool and delicious air, the long evening with its transparent

half-lights, the glistening and faintly slapping waves, the circles of swallows gambolling and piping.

[In the back of the Canada diary is the following, evidently a first draft or memorandum for a letter to some one.]

*Aug.* 1. I write this in the most beautiful extensive region of lakes and islands one can probably see on earth. Have been here several days; came down, leisurely cruising around, in a handsome little steam-yacht which I am living on half the time. The lakes are very extensive (over 1000 square miles) and the islands numberless, . . . here and there dotted with summer villas.

[*Same date.*] *Sunday noon.* Still among the Thousand Islands. This is about the centre of them, stretching twenty-five miles to the east and the same distance west. The beauty of the spot all through the day, the sunlit waters, the fanning breeze, the rocky and cedar-bronzed islets, the larger islands with fields and farms, the white-winged yachts and shooting row-boats, and over all the blue sky arching copious — make a sane, calm, eternal picture, to eyes, senses, and my soul.

*Evening.* An unusual show of boats gaily darting over the waters in every direction; not a poor model among them, and many of exquisite beauty and grace and speed. It is a precious experience, one of these long midsummer twilights in these waters and this atmosphere. Land of pure air! Land of unnumbered lakes! Land of the islets and the woods!

*Lakes of Thousand Islands, Aug.* 2. Early morning; a steady southwest wind; the fresh peculiar atmosphere of the hour and place worth coming a thousand miles to get. O'er the waters the gray rocks and dark-green cedars of a score of big and little islands around me; the added splendor of sunrise. As I sit, the sound of slapping water, to me most musical of sounds.

One peculiarity as you go about among the islands, or stop at them, is the entire absence of horses and wagons. Plenty of small boats, however, and always very handsome ones. Even the women row and sail skiffs. Often the men here build their boats themselves.

*Forenoon.* A run of three hours (some thirty miles) through the islands and lakes

in the Princess Louise to Kingston. Saw the whole scene, with its sylvan rocky and aquatic loveliness, to fine advantage. Such *amplitude* — room enough here for the summer recreation of all North America.

*Aug.* 4. In Montreal; guest of Dr. T. S. H.[1] Genial host, delightful quarters, good sleep. Explore the city leisurely, but quite thoroughly: St. James Street, with its handsome shops; Victoria Bridge; great French church; the English Cathedral; the old French church of Notre Dame de Bon Secours; the handsome, new, peculiarly and lavishly ornamented church of Notre Dame de Lourdes; the French streets of middle life, with their signs. A city of 150,000 people.

But the principal character of Montreal, to me, was from a drive along the street looking down on the river front and the wharves, where the steamships lay,—twenty or more of them,—some as handsome and

[1] Dr. T. Sterry Hunt, who first brought Whitman's writings to the notice of Dr. Bucke. He is described by Dr. B. in Walt Whitman Fellowship Papers, No. 6, as Mineralogist to the Geological Survey of Canada.

large as I ever saw; beautiful models, trim, two or three hundred feet long; some moving out, one or two coming in; plenty of room, and fine dockage, with heavy masonry banks.

*Aug.* 5, *Forenoon.* Three hours on Mount Royal, the great hill and park back of Montreal; spent the forenoon in a leisurely most pleasant drive on and about the hill; many views of the city below; the waters of the St. Lawrence in the clear air; the Adirondacks fifty miles or more distant; the excellent roads, miles of them, up hill and down; the plentiful woods, oak, pine, hickory; the French signboards — *Passez à droite* — as we zigzag around; the splendid views, distances, waters, mountains, vistas, some of them quite unsurpassable; the continual surprises of fine trees, in groups or singly; the grand rocky natural escarpments; frequently open spaces, larger or smaller, with patches of goldenrod or white yarrow, or along the road the red fire-weed or Scotch thistle in bloom; just the great hill itself, with its rocks and trees unmolested by any impertinence of ornamentation.

*Sunrise, the St. Lawrence near Quebec, Aug.* 5–6. Have just seen sunrise (standing on the extreme bow of the boat), the great round dazzling ball straight ahead over the broad waters, — a rare view. The shores pleasantly, thickly, dotted with houses, the river here wide and looking beautiful in the golden morning's sheen. As we advance northeast the earth-banks high and sheer, quite thickly wooded; thin dawn-mists quickly resolving; the youthful, strong, warm forenoon over the high green bluffs; little white houses seen along the banks as we steam rapidly through the verdure; occasionally a pretensive mansion, a mill, a two-tower'd church (in burnish'd tin). A pretty shore (miles of it, sitting up high, well-sprinkled with dwellings of habitans, — farmers, fishermen, French cottagers, etc.), verdant everywhere (but no big trees) for fifty miles before coming to Quebec. These little rural cluster-towns just back from the bank-bluffs, so happy and peaceful looking. I saw them through my glass, everything quite minutely and fully. In one such town of perhaps two hundred houses on sloping ground, the old church with glistening spire stood in the middle, and quite a large grave-

yard around it. I could see the white head-stones almost plainly enough to count them.

Approaching Quebec, rocks and rocky banks again, the shores lined for many miles with immense rafts and logs and partially hewn timber, the hills more broken and abrupt, the higher shores crowded with many fine dormer-window'd houses. Sail-ships appear in clusters with their weather-beaten spars and furl'd canvas. The river still ample and grand, the banks bold, plenty of round turns and promontories, plenty of gray rock cropping out. Rafts, rafts, of logs everywhere. The high rocky citadel thrusts itself out — altogether perhaps (at any rate as you approach it on the water, the sun two hours high) as picturesque an appearing city as there is on earth.

*Aug.* 6, *Quebec.* To the east of Quebec we pass the large fertile island of Orleans — the fields divided in long lateral strips across the island and appearing to be closely cultivated. In one field I notice them getting in the hay, a woman assisting, loading and hauling it. The view and scene continue broad and beautiful under the forenoon sun; around me an expanse of waters stretches

fore and aft as far as I can see; outlines of mountains in the distance north and south; of the farthest ones the bulk and the crest lines showing through strong but delicate haze like gray lace.

*Aug.* 6. [By daylight down the St. Lawrence.] Night — we are steaming up the Saguenay.

*Ha Ha Bay* [?] I am here nearly 1000 miles slightly east of due north from Philadelphia, by way of Montreal and Quebec — in the strangest country. Had a good night's sleep; cold, — overcoat, but up before sunrise, — northern lights every night, as with overcoat on or wrapt in my blanket, I plant myself on the forward deck.

[*Note at end of diary.*] Walt Whitman is at Ha Ha Bay. He says he would like to spend a month every year of his life there on the Saguenay River and near Cape Eternity and Trinity Rock.

*Aug.* 6 *and* 7, *Ha Ha Bay.* Up the black Saguenay River, a hundred or so miles — a dash of the grimmest, wildest, savagest scenery on the planet, I guess; a strong, deep (always hundreds of feet, sometimes thousands), dark-water'd river, very dark, with

high rocky hills, green and gray edged banks in all directions — no flowers, no fruits (plenty of delicious wild blueberries and raspberries up at Chicoutimi, though, and Ha Ha Bay).

The Priests. Saw them on every boat and at every landing. At Tadousac came a barge and handsome yacht, manned and evidently owned by them, to bring some departing passengers of their cloth and take on others. It looked funny to me at first to see the movements, ropes and tillers handled by these swarming black birds, but I soon saw that they sailed their craft skilfully and well. [The people are] simple, middling industrious, merry, devout Catholic, a church everywhere (priests in their black gowns everywhere, often groups of handsome young fellows), life toned low, few luxuries, none of the modern improvements, no hurry, often big families of children, nobody "progressive," all apparently living and moving entirely among themselves, taking small interest in the outside world of politics, changes, news, fashions; industrious, yet taking life very leisurely, with much dancing and music.

[Here follows what is evidently a thumb-nail sketch for the first part of *Fancies at Navesink.*] Again I steam over the Saguenay. The bronze-black waters, and the thin lines of white curd, and the dazzling sun-dash on the stream, the banks of grim-gray mountains and the rocks — I see the grim and savage scene.

Made a good breakfast of sea-trout, finishing off with wild raspberries. Hotels here; a few fashionables, but they get away soon; it is almost cold, except the middle of a few July and August days.

[*Undated fragment.*] The inhabitants peculiar to our eyes; many marked characters, looks, by-plays, costumes, etc., that would make the fortune of actors who could reproduce them.

A more or less aquatic character runs through the people. The two influences of French and British contribute a curious by-play.

Contrasts all the while. At this place, backed by these mountains high and bold, nestled down the hamlet of St. Pierre, apparently below the level of the bay, and

very secluded and cosy. Then two or three miles further on I saw a larger town high up on the plateau. At St. Paul's Bay a stronger cast of scenery, many rugged peaks.

[*No date.*] *On the Saguenay.* THE NOTICEABLE ITEMS ON LAND: the long boxes of blueberries (we had over a thousand of them carried on board at Ha Ha Bay one day I was on the pier); the groups of "boarders" (retaining all their most refined toggery); the vehicles, some "calashes," many queer old one-horse top-wagons with an air of faded gentility. ON THE WATER: the sail craft and steamers we pass out in the stream; the rolling and turning up of the white-bellied porpoises; some special island or rock (often very picturesque in color or form); all the scenes at the piers as we land to leave or take passengers and freight, especially many of the natives; the changing aspect of the light and the marvellous study from that alone every hour of the day or night; the indescribable sunsets and sunrises (I often see the latter now); the scenes at breakfast and other meal-times (and what an appetite one gets!); the delicious fish (I mean from the cook's fire, hot).

I had a good opera glass, and made constant use of it, sweeping every shore.

Northern lights every night.

*Quebec from the River*, *Aug.* 8, '80. Imagine a high rocky hill (the angles each a mile long), flush and bold to the river, with plateau on top, the front handsomely presented to the south and east (we are steaming up the river); on the principal height, still flush with the stream, a vast stone fort, the most conspicuous object in view; the magnificent St. Lawrence itself; many hills and ascents and tall edifices shown at their best — and steeples; the handsome town of Point Levi opposite; a long low sea-steamer just hauling out.

*Aug.* 8, *Sunday forenoon.* A leisurely varied drive around the city, stopping a dozen times and more. I went into the citadel, talked with the soldiers (over 100 here, Battery A, Canadian militia, the regulars having long since departed; a fort under the old dispensation, strong and picturesque as Gibraltar). Then to several Catholic churches and to the Esplanade.

The chime-bells rang out at intervals all the forenoon, joyfully clanging. It seems

almost an art here. I never before heard their peculiar sound to such mellifluous advantage and pleasure.

The old name of Quebec — Hochelega [*sic*]. [Hochelaga (ho-shel′-a-gah) is derived from an aboriginal word meaning beaver-grounds.]

*Aug.* 9, *Quebec. Forenoon.* We have driven out six or seven miles to the Montmorenci Falls, and I am writing this as I sit high up on the steps, the cascade immediately before me, the great rocky chasm at my right and an immense lumber depot bordering the river, far, far below, almost under me, to the left. It makes a pretty and picturesque show, but not a grand one. The principal fall, 30 or 40 feet wide and 250 high, pours roaring and white down a slant of dark gray rocks, and there are six or seven rivulet falls flanking it.

Since writing the above I have gone down the steps (some 350) to the foot of the Fall, which I recommend every visitor to do: the view is peculiar and fine. The whole scene grows steadily upon one, and I can imagine myself, after many visits, forming a finally

first-class estimate,[1] from what I see here of Montmorenci over a part of the scaly, grim, bald-black rock, the water falling downward like strings of snowy-spiritual beautiful tresses.

The road out here from the city is a very good one, lined with moderate-class houses, copious with women and children. Doors and windows wide open, exhibiting many groups to us as we passed. The men appear to be away: I wonder what they work at? Every house for miles is set diagonally with one of its corners to the road, never its gable or front. There seems little farming here, and I see no factories.

Through the forenoon watched the cascade under the advantages now of partly cloudy atmosphere and now of the full sunshine. The tamarack-trees. — The great loaves of bread, shaped like clumsy butterflies. — Jo Le Clerc, our driver, lifting his finger. —

[1] This word in the MS. has a query above it, — a common habit of Whitman, not only in this diary, but elsewhere, when he felt not wholly satisfied but that he might be able later to write a better word. Very frequently, too, in this diary, a second (alternative) word is written above the first, as if in his mind the choice were doubtful.

Hundreds of (to our eyes) funny-looking one-horse vehicles, — calashes ; antique gigs ; heavy two-seated covered voitures, always drawn by one horse ; long narrow strips of farms [as in France] ; coarse, rank tobacco ; potatoes, plenty and fine-looking ; big-roofed one-story houses with projecting eaves ; entire absence of barns. — The ruins of Montcalm's country-seat, the strong old stone walls still standing to the second story ; indeed, many old stone walls, including those of the old city, still standing.

*Aug.* 9 [*on the St. Lawrence*]. Very pleasant journey of 180 miles this afternoon and to-night ; crowds of Catholic priests on board with their long loose black gowns, and the broad brims of their hats turned into a peculiar triangle.

*Aug.* 10. Again in Montreal. As I write this I am seated aft in the delicious river breeze on the steamboat that is to take me back west some 380 miles from here to Hamilton. Two hours yet before we start ; few passengers, as they come east by the boats, and then generally take the railroad back. Montreal has the largest show of sail ships and handsome ocean steamers of any

place on the river and lake line, and I am right in full sight of them.

Going on the river westward from Montreal is pretty slow and tedious, taking a long time to get through the canals and many locks, to Lake St. Francis, where the steamer emerges to the river again. These rapids along here — the boats can descend, but cannot go up them. A great inconvenience to the navigator, but they are quite exciting with their whirls and roar and foam, and very picturesque.

Here, too, are graveyards. In a lovely little shore-nook, under an apple-tree, green, grassy, fenced by rails, lapped by the waters, I saw a grave, — white headstone and footstone; could almost read the inscription.

*Aug.* 10, *Evening.* Wondrously clear, pleasant, and calm. I think it must have been unusual; the river was as smooth as glass for hours. All the stars shone in it from below as brightly as above, — the young moon, and Arcturus, and Aquila, and, after 10, lustrous Jupiter. Nothing could be more exquisite. I sat away forward by the bow and watched the show till after 11.

*Aug.* 12, 11 A. M. As we take the cars at Toronto to go west, the first thing I notice is the change of temperature; no more the cool fresh air of the lakes, the St. Lawrence, and the Saguenay.

*Aug.* 12, 4½ P. M. I am writing this at Hamilton, high up on a hill south of the town.

*Aug.* 13, P. M. I write this on a singular strip of beach off Hamilton.

To-day have been driving about for several hours, — some of the roads high up on the crest of the mountain; spent a pleasant hour in the wine vaults of Mr. Haskins, and another at the vineyard and hospitable house of Mr. Paine, who treated us to some delicious native wine.

*Aug.* 14. I am writing this on the high balcony of the Asylum at Hamilton (Ontario, Canada).[1] The city is spread in full view before me. (Is there not an escaped patient? I see a great commotion, — Dr. W. and several attendants, men and women, rushing

[1] Dr. Bucke was during the year 1876 medical superintendent of this asylum. — *Free Press*, London, Ont., Feb. 2, 1902 (obituary).

down the cliff). — A dark, moist, lowering forenoon; balmy air though; wind south-west.

*Aug.* 14, 5½ P. M. Arrived back in London a couple of hours ago, all right. Am writing this in my room, Dr. B.'s house.

Along the way on the journey from Hamilton to London everywhere through the car-windows I saw locust-trees growing and the broad yellow faces of sunflowers, the sumach bushes with their red cones, and the orchard trees loaded with apples.

The waters, the lakes, and the indescribable grandeur and[1] of the St. Lawrence are the beauty of Canada through this vast line of two thousand miles and over. In its peculiar advantages, sanities, and charms, I doubt whether the globe for democratic purposes has its equal.

[A little farther back in his diary Whitman has the following equally enthusiastic paragraphs of generalizations on Canada. They are labelled thus:

" ? For lecture — for conclusion ? "]

A grand, sane, temperate land, the amplest

[1] The blank space, and others below, are reproduced from the MS.

and most beautiful and stream of water, — a river and necklace of vast lakes, pure, sweet, eligible, supplied by the chemistry of millions of square miles of gushing springs and melted snows. No stream this for side *frontier* — stream rather for the great central current, the glorious mid-artery, of the great Free Pluribus Unum of America, the solid Nationality of the present and the future, the home of an improved grand race of men and women; not of some select class only, but of larger, saner, better masses. I should say this vast area (from lat. and ) was fitted to be their unsurpassed habitat.

I know nothing finer. The European democratic tourist, philanthropist, geographer, or genuine inquirer, will make a fatal mistake who leaves these shores without understanding this. — I know nothing finer, either from the point of view of the sociologist, the traveller, or the artist, than a month's devotion to even the surface of Canada, over the line of the great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, the fertile, populous, and happy province of Ontario, the [province] of Quebec, with another month to the hardy maritime regions of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland.

[In Whitman's Canadian diary, as I received it, I find the following notes on loose sheets.]

I see, or imagine I see in the future, a race of two million farm-families, ten million people — every farm running down to the water,[1] or at least in sight of it — the best air and drink and sky and scenery of the globe, the sure foundation-nutriment of heroic men and women. The summers, the winters — I have sometimes doubted whether there could be a great race without the hardy influence of winters in due proportion.

Total Dominion, 3,500,000 square miles. Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Manitoba, Hudson Bay, and Northwest Territories. (Newfoundland not in Dominion.) Area equal to the whole of Europe. Population, 1880, four to five millions.

Principal timber: white and red pine. The woods are full of white oak, elm, beech, ash, maple (bird's-eye, curled, etc.), walnut, cedar, birch, tamarack, sugar orchards (maple).

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[1] The St. Lawrence.

The honey-bee everywhere; rural ponds and lakes (often abounding with the great white sweet-smelling water-lily); wild fruits and berries everywhere; in the vast flat grounds the prairie anemone.

The fisheries of Canada are almost unparalleled. . . . Then the furs. . . .

If the most significant trait of modern civilization is benevolence (as a leading statesman has said), it is doubtful whether this is anywhere illustrated to a fuller degree than in the province of Ontario. All the maimed, insane, idiotic, blind, deaf and dumb, needy, sick and old, minor criminals, fallen women, foundlings, have advanced and ample provision of house and care and oversight, at least fully equal to anything of the kind in any of the United States — probably indeed superior to them. In Ontario for its eighty-eight electoral ridings, each one returning a member of parliament, there are four Insane Asylums, an Idiot Asylum, one Institution for the Blind, one for the Deaf and Dumb, one for Foundlings, a Reformatory for Girls, one for Women, and no end of homes for the old and infirm, for waifs, and for the sick.

Its school system, founded on the Massa-

chusetts plan, is one of the best and most comprehensive in the world.

Some of the good people of Ontario have complained in my hearing of faults and fraudulencies, commissive or omissive, on the part of the government, but I guess said people have reason to bless their stars for the general fairness, economy, wisdom, and liberality of their officers and administration.

*Aug.* 21, '80 [*London, Canada*]. I rose this morning at four and look'd out on the most pure and refulgent starry show. Right over my head, like a Tree-Universe spreading with its orb-apples, — Aldebaran leading the Hyades; Jupiter of amazing lustre, softness, and volume; and, not far behind, heavy Saturn, — both past the meridian; the seven sparkling gems of the Pleiades; the full moon, voluptuous and yellow, and full of radiance, an hour to setting in the west. Everything so fresh, so still; the delicious something there is in early youth, in early dawn — the spirit, the spring, the *feel;* the air and light, precursors of the untried sun; love, action, forenoon, noon, life — full-fibred, latent with them all. And is not

that Orion the mighty hunter? Are not those the three glittering studs in his belt? And there to the north Capella and his kids.

*Aug.* 29. *At Dr. B.'s.* The robins on the grassy lawn (I sometimes see a dozen at a time, great fat fellows). The little black-and-yellow bird with his billowy flight [the goldfinch]; the flocks of sparrows. [Elsewhere in this diary he writes of "the long clear quaver of the robin, its mellow and reedy note," although he erased the words as being unsatisfactory. But I think they are admirably descriptive of the timbre of the robin's evening song as well as the song itself.]

END OF THE DIARY IN CANADA

# FROM OTHER JOURNALS OF WALT WHITMAN

# FROM OTHER JOURNALS OF WALT WHITMAN

*Wednesday, 4th March,* 1863. SCENE UP TO NOON. CLOSE OF THE 37TH CONGRESS; HOUSE. Well, here is the 4th of March, and two out of the four years of the Lincoln administration have gone by. And now there are two to follow. What will happen during those two years?

*Forenoon, 4th March.* The House now presents a most animated and characteristic scene. The ranges of crowded galleries are in shadow, while the strong day showers its powerful and steady streams upon the floor. Did I think and say it looked so much better at night? Well, I think I never saw it look better than now (11¼ A. M.).

A member from New York has just been making a most excited little speech. At this moment the clerk is calling the ayes and noes. The members and many distinguished and undistinguished visitors are filling the floor, talking, walking, sauntering in twos or threes, or gathered together in

little knots. — The clapping of hands calling the pages; the fresh green of the carpets and desks; the strong, good-tinted panel frames of the glass roof; the short, decided voice of the speaker; the continual soda-pop-like burstings of members calling "Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker!" the incessant bustle, motion, surging hubbub of voices, undertoned but steady.

There is a rather notable absence of military uniforms on the floor of the house; crowded as it is at this moment, I do not, as I sweep my eyes around, see a single shoulder-strap.

Interruption: a message from the Senate of the United States; it is half-past eleven; there are but thirty minutes left for the 37th Congress; the ladies' gallery in the House is about half of the whole room devoted to the public; a resolution is adopted giving a boy who was employed by the House $100 — he has had his ankles crushed, disabled; the hands of the clock move on; there is great hubbub and confusion, actual disorder; bang! bang! bang! the speaker's hammer is rapidly falling, and he sternly calls for gentlemen to come to order; and still the hands of the clock invisibly move

on; there are but fifteen minutes left; voices of hubbub; bump, bump, bump, bump, bump! "Gentlemen will please take their seats." "Not one step further, gentlemen, till there is something like order."

Five minutes to twelve; there is a kind of hush and abeyance — not the hubbub now there has been; some filibustering is attempted on a small scale; tellers are called to clear up a disputed vote; the strong hum goes on; the crowd is very great; the laws of the door have been relaxed and everybody appears to have somebody in tow; the hands are on 12; the speaker rises; the clerks, officers, pages, gather in a close phalanx around the desk, on the steps and close to them; the hubbub subsides into the stillness of death; the doorkeepers guard all the doors; the speaker's address. — The 37th Congress is adjourned *sine die;* the impression evidently good as he concludes; there is hearty applause, and then things are untied; the doors fly open; the many-drest public streams in; all below there is now a crawling jam of people, — soldier boys, hoosiers, gents, etc. etc. etc. A dust arises from the tread of so many footsteps — boots with the mud dried on them; the

last breath of the 37th Congress, full of dim opaque particles, rises and fills the air of the most beautiful room in the world; but the light strikes down through it; the crowd wave their hats.

Victor Hugo's Année Terrible [1870–71] (as translated to me by Mr. Aubin, Oct. '72). First the Prologue, the splendid portraiture of the People and the Mob. A whole world, if it is wrong, does not outweigh one just man. Distinction between the People and the Mob — magnificent. It is not incense that has broken the nose of the Sphinx: it is the bosom made vulgar by the belly. — "Sedan." The close, where the sword of France representing all the great heroic characters and all the famous victories (mentioned by name) is "by the hand of a bandit" ignominiously surrendered.

[The passages in "L'Année Terrible" referred to are as follows:

"Un monde, s'il a tort, ne pèse pas un juste,
Tout un océan fou bat en vain un grand cœur."

Says Hugo: The crowd and the idealist have rude encounters: Moses, Ezekiel, Dante,

were men grave and severe. The spirit of redoutable thinkers can be better employed than in caressing the sphinx —

"Ce grand monstre de pierre accroupé qui médite,
Ayant en lui l'énigme adorable ou maudite;
L'ouragan n'est pas tendre aux colosses émus;
C'est ne pas d'encensoirs que le sphinx est camus.
La vérité, voilà le grand encens austère
Qu'on doit à cette masse où palpite un mystère,
Et qui porte en son sein qu'un ventre appesantit,
Le droit juste mêlé de l'injuste appétit."

At the close of the section called "Août" and also headed "Sedan," Hugo is describing in grandiose imagery the battle of Sedan, — the vast clouds of smoke, the thunder-roll of the cannon, the feeling of honor, of devotion to country, the sublime moment when, in the passion of battle, the soldier is ready to consecrate his life to his country's welfare, when the trumpets are breathing their thrilling sounds, and the word is "resist or die!" And then (continues Hugo) is heard this monstrous and cowardly cry "I wish to live," "Je veux vivre" (alluding to Napoleon the Little).

" Alors la Gaule, alors la France, alors la gloire,
Alors Brennus, l'audace, et Clovis, la victoire,

. . . . . .

Les hommes du dernier carré de Waterloo,
Et tous les chefs de guerre, Héristal, Charlemagne,

. . . . . .

Napoléon plus grand que César et Pompée
Par la main d'un bandit rendirent leur épée."]

New York Visit. Came on to N. Y. June 13, '78, to 1309 Fifth Ave. 2d door south of 86th street. — At Mr. Bryant's funeral [the poet Bryant] at the church in 4th Ave. June 14, '78. — Up the Hudson River to West Point to Mr. and Mrs. Bigelow's, Sunday, June 16th.

(Wm. H. Taylor, policeman, 959 Fifth Ave.; house south of 85th St.[1] — Alonzo Sprague, 33 years of age — western — been two years with Frank Aiken, the actor.)

Visit to Watson Gilder's, evening of June 14. Modjeska, Wyatt Eaton, Charles De Kay.

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[1] Sprinkled through all Whitman's pocket-book diaries are names of men to whom he was attracted, *e.g.*, a Pullman-car conductor, a policeman, a 'bus driver, a great poet. His magnetic love always drew him hungeringly toward manly men.

20–24*th June* (*inclusive*). Visit at John Burroughs's, Esopus (Smith Caswell).

25*th June.* Down the bay with Sorosis party.

*July* 3, '78. Visited the *Tribune* newspaper office; read proof [of a letter they printed]. Up, up, up, in the elevator some eight or nine stories, to the top of the tall tower. Then the most wonderful expanse and views! A living map indeed, — all New York and Brooklyn, and all the waters and lands adjacent for twenty miles, every direction. My thoughts of the beauty and amplitude of these bay and river surroundings confirmed. Other thoughts also confirmed, — that of a fitter name; for instance, Mannahatta, "the place around which there are hurried and joyous waters, continually" — (that 's the sense of the old aboriginal word). — Was treated with much courtesy by Whitelaw Reid,[1] the editor who placed his cab at my disposal. Had a pleasant evening drive through the Park [Central Park], it being on my way home.

[1] Perhaps to make up for his long years of lending the *Tribune* to insulting attacks on Whitman.

*Oct., Nov., etc.*, '79. Notes in St. Louis. In the Mercantile Library on Fourth Street (where I used to go for an hour daily to read the New York and Philadelphia papers by courtesy of Mr. Dyer) they have a very good photograph from life of Edgar Poe and a bust of Thomas H. Benton, the best life likeness. Also a colossal clay figure, very good, of Mr. Shaw, a rich philanthropist here, and donor of a handsome park and botanical garden to the city.

[*New York*], *Sunday*, '79. Took a slow walk forenoon to-day (Easter Sunday: the chick is breaking the egg) along Fifth Avenue where it flanks the Park, from 85th to 90th street. I rest my note-book, to write this, on the roof-shaped coping of the wall. All round this vast pleasure-ground has been built a costly, grim, forbidding stone fence, some parts of it seven feet high, others lower, capped with heavy bevelled rough marble,—in my judgment a nuisance, the whole thing. There ought to be no such fence; the grounds ought to be open all round (both the spirit of the matter and the visible fact and convenience are important and require it).

Perhaps (though I am not sure) the general planning, designing, and carrying out of this Park, from its original state to the present, are successes and the results good. But the same ideas, theories (by the same person, I understand), applied to Prospect Park, Brooklyn, have in my opinion done their best to spoil that incomparable hill and ground, — in some respects the grandest site for a park in the world. The same error in Capitol Hill at Washington, — exploiting the designs of ingrain carpets, with sprawling and meaningless lines.

*Aug.* 9, '79. Gorgeous Flowers. As I walk the suburbs of a town where I am temporarily staying, great sunflowers bend their tall and stately discs in full bloom in silent salute to the day-orb. Many other gorgeous blossoms. Roses of Sharon are out, both the white ones and the red. Then the tawny trumpet-flower, its rich-deep orange-yellow on copious vines in back yards and on the gables of old houses. Great balls of the blue hydrangeas are not uncommon. I stop long before a tall clump of the Japanese sunflowers.

[ *May* 13 *to* 26, '81. Down in the country, mostly in the woods, enjoying the early summer, the bird music, and the pure air. For interest and occupation I busy myself three or four hours every day, arranging, revising, cohering, here and there slightly rewriting (and sometimes cancelling) a new edition of L. of G. complete in one volume. I do the main part of the work out in the woods. I like to try my pieces by negligent, free, primitive Nature, — the sky, the seashore, the sunshine, the plentiful grass, or dead leaves (as now) under my feet, and the song of some catbird, wren, or russet thrush within hearing; like (as now) the half-shadowed tall-columned trees, with green leaves and branches in relief against the sky. Such is the library, the study where (seated on a big log) I have sifted out and given some finishing touches to this edition (J. R. O[sgood] publisher, 1881). I take a bout at it every day for an hour or two — sometimes twice a day.

Received back to-day the MS. of the little piece of "A Summer Invocation," which I had sent to H.'s [Harper's] magazine. The editor said he returned it because his readers would n't understand any

meaning to it. (Put in Holland's [Scribner's].)

THE ENGLISH SPARROWS. *March* 30, '79, *Sunday forenoon*, 10, 11, *etc.* The window where I sit (after a good breakfast with my hospitable friends Mr. and Mrs. J. M. S[covel] and their family, who have all gone off to church, leaving me to myself) opens on a spacious side-yard exhibiting near-at-hand views of an old extensive Ivy Vine, with thick-matted, yet-green foliage, nearly covering the east gable wall of the adjoining house (fifty feet square, I should guess), alive at this moment, in its sunny exposure, with the darting, flirting, twittering, of scores, hundreds, of English sparrows, busily engaged, with much loquacity, pulling old nests to pieces and building new ones. I had before in my walks noticed this grand Ivy, with its flocks of sparrows; but now alone here, comfortable, I note leisurely the little drama, taking it all in and enjoying it. (What a noble and verdant vine yet — a lesson to old age.) What tireless, vehement noisy tit-bits the birds are! What a rollicking time! Evidently what fun! Sometimes, at a spirt of wind coming, the whole

swarm of them, as if frightened, emerge instantaneously from the recesses of the vast vine, and slant and radiate off like flashes; but it is all affectation, for presently they return, and operations are renewed and carried on as actively as ever. It is a hurried, whirling, crossing, chattering, most intense and interested scene, for an hour. (As many have said or thought, who knows but what there are beings of superior spheres, invisible, looking on the chattering activity and affectations of man, with the same critical top-loftical air? Echo — who knows?)

*Aug.* 7, '81. How deeply I was touched just now reading in the account of the famed Italian tragedian and manager Modena that he had succeeded in "founding a school of acting with *Liberty* as its keystone and motto"! With that inspiration he seems to have brought forward Salvini and Rossi.

Leaves of Grass Finished. *Boston, Oct.* 22, '81, 8.30 A. M. I am pencilling this in the N. E. and N. Y. depot, foot of Summer street, waiting to start west in the 9 o'clock train. Have been in Boston the last two months seeing to the "materialization"

of my completed "Leaves of Grass" — first deciding on the kind of type, size of page, head-lines, consecutive arrangement of pieces, etc.; then the composition, proof-reading, electrotyping, etc., which all went on smoothly and with sufficient rapidity. Indeed I quite enjoyed the work (have felt the last few days as though I should like to shoulder a similar job once or twice every year). The printing-office (Rand and Avery's [corner Franklin and Federal streets]) is a fine one, and I had the very genial and competent aid throughout of Henry H. Clark, principal proof-reader and book-superintendent of the concern.[1] And so I have put those completed poems in permanent type-form at last. And of the present prose volume [what volume? he did not begin to prepare his first and only prose volume, *Specimen Days*, until July, '82; see first page of that work] — are not its items ("ducks and drakes," as the boys term the little pebble-flats they send at random to

[1] Mr. Clark was for many years at the University Press, Cambridge, and used to tell me how he would sometimes induce Longfellow to alter a word at his suggestion, the poet often dropping in from his home on the same street to oversee the work of getting new poems into type.

skip over the surface of the water and sink in its depths) — is not the preceding collection mainly an attempt at specimen samples of the bases and arrieres of those same poems? often unwitting to myself at the time.

*Sunday Morning, early May,* '84. As I saunter along I mark the profuse pink-and-white of the wild honeysuckle, the creamy blossoming of the dog-wood; everything most fragrant, early season; odors of pine and oak and the flowering grape-vines; the difference between shady places and strong sunshine; the holy Sabbath morning; the myriad living columns of the temple, the soothing silence, the incense of some moss, and the earth fragrance after a rain, strangely touching the soul.

*Sunday, Sept.* 14, '84, *Cape May, N. J.* I am writing this on the beach at Cape May. Came down this morning on the West Jersey R. R.; had a good ride along the shore, then a sail, beating about in a fine breeze for over an hour; then a capital good dinner (a friend I met insisted on my having some champagne). After dinner I went down alone and have had two soothing hours close

by the sea-edge, seated on the sand, to the hoarse music of the surf rolling in.[1]

*Jan.* 11, '85. *At J. M. S[covel]'s* Hinds' army reminiscences as he told them by the wood fire in S.'s parlor. The scenes of May, '64, as witnessed at Fredericksburg; that whole old town glutted, filled, probably 15 to 20,000 wounded, broken, dead, dying soldiers, sent northward from Grant's forces on their terrific promenade from the Rapidan down to Petersburg, fighting the way, not only day by day, but mile by mile — sent up from the battles of "the Wilderness"; groups, crowds, or ones or twos, lying in every house, in every church, uncared for; the hundreds and hundreds dying; the other hundreds of corpses of the dead; the fearful heat of the weather; the many undressed wounds filled with maggots (actually more than one thousand, and more than two thousand, such cases).

[The following four items marked in red ink "Specimen Days." There are many such

[1] It was on this Jersey shore that, a few months previously, he had composed his wonderful poem "With Husky-Haughty Lips, O Sea," of which he sent me a proof-slip (as he often did of other poems) inscribed "Harper's Monthly, March, '84."

in his MSS. evidently intended for a possible new edition.]

Grisi and Mario arrived in N. Y. Aug. 19, 1854; I heard them that winter and in 1855.

The cholera in N. Y. in 1855.

Kossuth in America in 1851; I saw him make his entrée in N. Y. latter part of 1851, riding up Broadway.

N. Y. Exposition (Crystal Palace), 6th Ave., 40th to 42d St.; opened July 14, 1853 (I go for a year); the great heat August that year — 400 deaths in three or four days in N. Y.[1]

[Among Whitman's MSS. I find the following clipping from the Brooklyn *Daily Times*, Jan. 20, '85.]

I recollect (doubtless I am now going to be egotistical about it), the question of the new Water Works (magnificently outlined by McAlpine and duly carried out and improved by Kirkwood, first-class engineers, both), was still pending, and the works, though well under way, continued to be strongly opposed by many. With the consent of the proprietor, I bent the whole

[1] For more about this Crystal Palace, see Dr. R. M. Bucke's *Walt Whitman*, p. 25.

weight of the paper steadily in favor of the McAlpine plan as against a flimsy, cheap and temporary series of works that would have long since broken down and disgraced the city.

This, with my course on another matter, the securing to public use of Washington Park (old Fort Greene), stoutly championed by me some thirty-five years ago against heavy odds during an editorship of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, are "feathers in my wings" that I would wish to preserve.

WALT WHITMAN.

# PERSONAL MEMORANDA NOTES AND JOTTINGS

All through young and middle age I thought my heredity-stamp was mainly decidedly from my mother's side; but, as I grow older, and latent traits come out, I see my father's also. As to loving and disinterested parents, no boy or man ever had more cause to bless and thank them than I.[1]

[For Dr. Bucke's *Walt Whitman* the poet sent on certain autobiographic materials in his own autograph. The following paragraph was not used by Dr. Bucke.]

Like the Whitmans, the Van Velsors too were farmers on their own land. Though both families were well-to-do for those times, the biblical prayer for "neither poverty nor riches" might have been considered as fulfilled in either case. The poet's father died in Brooklyn, New York, July 11, 1855; the "dear dear mother" in Camden, New Jersey,

[1] Written on the back of a letter from James M. Scovel, which is dated Oct. 15, 1883.



L. of C.

May 23, 1873. . . . Though the concrete and entire foundation of the poet, as person and writer, doubtless comes from his solid English fatherhood, the emotional and liberty-loving, the social, the preponderating qualities of adhesiveness, immovable gravitation and simplicity, with a certain conservative protestantism and other traits, are unmistakably from his motherhood, and are pure Hollandic or Dutch.

[For my work on Whitman (the bulk of which he read in MS. and approved), he sent me the following notes on his ancestry. I used a small portion of these, inserting what seemed available almost verbatim, but give them now entire.]

Going back far enough ancestrally, Walt Whitman undoubtedly comes meandering from a blended tri-heredity stream of Dutch (Hollandisk), the original Friends (Quakers), and the Puritans of Cromwell's time. The first Whitman immigrant settled in Connecticut, 1635, and a son of his went over to Long Island as farmer at West Hills, Suffolk County; and a young descendant five generations afterward marries a daughter of Cornelius and Amy Van Velsor (the last of Quaker training and *née* Williams). This

daughter was the mother of W. W. Though developed, and Anglofied, and Americanized, she was Hollandisk from top to toe, and W. W. inherits her to the life, emotionally, full-bloodedness, voice, and physiognomy.

Whitman favors (as the old vernacular word had it) his mother, *née* Louisa Van Velsor, of Queens County, New York. She was of ordinary medium size (a little *plus*), of splendid physique and health, a hard worker, had eight children, was beloved by all who met her; good-looking to the last; lived to be nearly eighty. No tenderer or more invariable tie was ever between mother and son than the love between her and W. W. No one could have seen her and her father, Major Kale (Cornelius) Van Velsor, either in their prime or in their older age, without instantly perceiving their plainly marked Hollandisk physiognomy, color, and body-build. Walt Whitman has all of it: he shows it in his old features now, his full flesh and red color. The Van Velsors (Walt's mother's family) were pure Low Dutch of the third or fourth remove from the original emigrants. Few realize how this Dutch element has percolated into our New York, Pennsylvania, and other

regions,[1] not so much in ostensible literature and politics, but deep in the blood and breed of the race, and to tinge all that is to come. Like the Quakers, the Dutch are very practical and materialistic, and are great money-makers, in the bulk and concrete of the ostent of life, but are yet terribly transcendental and cloudy, too. More than half the Hollandisk immigrants to New York Bay became farmers, and a goodly portion of the rest became engineers or sailors.

It is curious how deep influences, elements, and characteristic-trends operate through races and long periods of time, in practical events or palpably in long continued struggles of war and peace — and then sprout out eventually in some marked book, perhaps poem. Whitman himself is fond of resuming the history and development of the Low Dutch, and their fierce war against Philip and Alva, and the building of the dykes, and the shipping and trade and colonization from 1600 to the present, and the old cities and towers and soldiery and markets and salt-air, and flat topography, and human physi-

[1] See other details of this in my *Reminiscences of Walt Whitman*, p. 89.

ognomy and bodily form (not the Jewish seems to be more strictly perpetuated than these Hollandisk), and their coming and planting here in America, and investing themselves not so much in outward manifestations, but in the blood and deeds of the race ; and the poet considers his "Leaves of Grass" to be, in some respects, spinally understood only by reference to that Hollandisk history and personality.

[The following is marked in red ink: "? a ¶ for Specimen Days."]

There is something in concrete Nature itself in all its parts that is a quality, an identity, apart from and superior to any appreciation of the same through realism or mysticism (the very thought of which involves abstraction) or through literature or art. This something belonging to the objects themselves not only lies beyond all the expressions of literature and art, but seems disdainful of them and fades away at their touch.

[The two next paragraphs are marked, "2d vol. Specimen Days."]

After reading the pages of *Specimen*

*Days* do you object that they are a great jumble, everything scattered, disjointed, bound together without coherence, without order or system? My answer would be, So much the better do they reflect the life they are intended to stand for.

Though I would not have dared to gather the various pieces of the following book in a single volume with a generic name unless I felt the strong inward thread of spinality running through all the pieces and giving them affinity-purpose — I yet realize that the collection is indeed a mélange and its cohesion and singleness of purpose not so evident at first glance.

It is said, perhaps rather quizzically, by my friends that I bring civilization, politics, the topography of a country, and even the hydrography, to one final test, — the capability of producing, favoring, and maintaining a fine crop of children, a magnificent race of men and women. I must confess I look with comparative indifference on all the lauded triumphs of the greatest manufacturing, exporting, gold-and-silver-producing nation in comparison with a race of really fine physical perfectionists.

Col. J. W. F[orney] remarked in the course of our talk this evening: "If I were asked to put my finger on the name of any eminent official in this great city [Philadelphia] — and I know nine-tenths of them — as of undoubted honesty and integrity, I could not do it." (F., who has been in public life for forty years, and knows everybody, especially the Philadelphians, is not a sour man, either — is quite lenient, human, tolerant.) [Col. Forney died in 1881.]

[Notes for a Canada Lecture, never delivered.] In modern times the new word *Business* has been brought to the front and now dominates individuals and nations (always of account in all ages, but never before confessedly leading the rest as in our 19th century); Business — not the mere sordid, prodding, muck-and-money-raking mania, but an immense and noble attribute of man, the occupation of nations and individuals (without which is no happiness), the progress of the masses, the tie and interchange of all the peoples of the earth. Ruthless war and arrogant dominion-conquest was the ideal of the antique and mediæval hero;

Business shall be, nay is, the word of the modern hero.

[1883.] Meeting with Thurlow Weed and long talk with him.

Presidential Election. *Oct.* 31, '84. The political parties are trying — but mostly in vain — to get up some fervor of excitement on the pending Presidential election. It comes off next Tuesday. There is no question at issue of any importance. I cannot "enthuse" at all. I think of the elections of '30 and '20. Then there *was* something to arouse a fellow. But I like well the *fact* of all these national elections — have written a little poem about it (to order), — published in a Philadelphia daily, of 26th instant.[1] [The candidates in '84 were Blaine and Cleveland; the issues tariff and Chinese exclusion. Blaine was defeated, owing to Conkling's defection.]

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[1] "If I Should Need to Name, O Western World." *Press*, October 26 (styled now "Election Day, 1884." It is only poetic prose. Compare it with Whittier's nervy lyric "After Election.")

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